

filed with the Board should be addressed to the Board of Contract Appeals, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-0600. The Board's telephone number is 202-720-7023; the Board's facsimile number is 202-720-3059.

§ 24.7 Public information.

(a) The records of the Board are open to the public for inspection and copying at the Office of the Board. Decisions and rulings of the Board shall be published from time to time and copies made available to the public upon request at cost of duplication except that the Board shall, in its discretion, have authority to make copies of decisions and rulings available at no charge in accordance with Department policy, appendix A to 7 CFR part 1, subpart A. Hearings before the Board shall be open to the public.

(b) Information that is to be made available for public inspection and copying under provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(2) and 7 CFR 1.5 may be obtained at the office of the Board. The address of the Board is set forth in § 24.6. Except for such information as is generally available to the public, requests should be in writing and submitted in accordance with 7 CFR 1.6 and paragraphs (c) and (d) of this § 24.7.

(c) Facilities for copying are available at the office of the Board.

(d) Facilities for inspection and copying are available during established office hours for the Board, usually 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Department of Agriculture has established a schedule of fees for copies of information. The Board charges for copies of records in accordance with the Department fee schedule, appendix A to 7 CFR part 1, subpart A.

(e) The Vice Chair is authorized to receive requests for records submitted in accordance with 7 CFR 1.6(a), and to make determinations regarding whether to grant or deny requests for records exempt from mandatory disclosure under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552(b). This official is authorized to

(1) Extend the ten-day administrative deadline for reply pursuant to 7 CFR 1.14,

(2) Make discretionary releases pursuant to 7 CFR 1.17(b) of records except from mandatory disclosure, and

(3) Make determinations regarding the charging of fees.

(f) Appeals from denials of request submitted under paragraph (e) of this section shall be submitted in accordance with 7 CFR 1.6(e) to the Chair, Board of Contract Appeals, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-0600. The Chair shall determine whether to grant or deny the appeal and shall also make all necessary determinations relating to an extension of the twenty-day administrative deadline for reply pursuant to 7 CFR 1.14, discretionary release pursuant to 7 CFR 1.17(b) of records exempt from mandatory disclosure under 5 U.S.C. 552(b), and the charging of appropriate fees.

§ 24.8 Rules of procedure.

The Chair of the Board shall prescribe its Rules of Procedure and publish such Rules in subpart B of this part 24 and may prescribe and so publish amendments from time to time. The Rules of Procedure and any amendments thereto shall be consistent with this subpart.

§ 24.9 Definitions.

Board means the Board of Contract Appeals established under this subpart.

Contract means any agreement entered into by the Department or its agencies or authorized officials with any person having the legal effect of a contract between the Department and such person.

Contracting officer means any person who, by appointment in accordance with applicable regulations, has the authority to enter into and administer contracts and make determinations and findings with respect thereto and includes the authorized representative of the contracting officer, acting within the limits of his/her authority.

Days means calendar days. Except as otherwise provided by law, in computing any period of time prescribed by the rules in this part or any order of the Board, the day of the event from which the designated period of time begins to run shall not be included, but

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the last day of the period shall be included unless it is a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which even the period shall run to the end of the next business day. If mailing is required, the date of the postmark shall be treated as the date action was taken.

Department means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Government attorney means the attorney of the Department designated to handle a particular appeal on behalf of the contracting officer.

Person means any individual, partnership, public or private corporation, association, agency or other legal entity.

Subpart B—Rules of Procedure

§ 24.21 Rules of Procedure of Agriculture Board of Contract Appeals—AGBCA.

(a) *Preface to Rules. Time, computation and extensions.* All time limitations specified for various procedural actions are computed as maximums and are not to be fully exhausted if the action described can be accomplished in a lesser period. Where appropriate and justified, however, extensions of time will be granted. All requests for extensions of time by either party shall be in writing and state good cause for the requested extension. The Board may grant such extensions on good cause shown except that the Board shall not extend the time prescribed under § 24.5 for taking an appeal.

(b) *Ex parte communications.* No member of the Board or of the Board's staff shall entertain, nor shall any person directly or indirectly involved in an appeal submit to the Board or the Board's staff, off the record, any evidence, explanation, analysis, or advice, whether written or oral, regarding any matter at issue in an appeal. This provision does not apply to consultation among Board members or to *ex parte* communication concerning the Board's administrative functions or procedures.

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RULES—PRELIMINARY PROCEDURES

Rule 1. Appeals, How and When Taken

(a) *Notice of Appeal—90 days.* Notice of an appeal shall be in writing and mailed or otherwise furnished to the Board within 90 days